

Utilities and Sustainability Task Force
Minutes from the 3/15/07 Meeting

Next meeting: April 19, 2007 at the Millbrae Westin, starting at 2:30 (see below)

In attendance:

Bob Cormia, Sustainable Silicon Valley
Bill Dickenson, Belmont City Council
Lori Duvall, Sun Microsystems
Deborah Gordon, Woodside City Council
Kathy Lavezzi, PG&E
Terry Nagel, Mayor of Burlingame
Richard Napier, C/CAG
Mario Panoringan, Colma-Daly City Chamber of Commerce
Barbara Pierce, Mayor of Redwood City
Nicole Sandkulla, BAWSCA
Dianne Anderson, San Mateo County RecycleWorks (staff)
Gina Blus, Consultant (staff)
Kim Springer, San Mateo County RecycleWorks (staff)

Not in attendance:

Bruce Chamberlain, ABAG Energy Watch
Jerry Hill, San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
Sepi Richardson, Brisbane City Council

Guests:

Jill Boone, member emeritus
Brandi deGarmeaux, USTF student intern
Dianne Dryer, Menlo Park staff
Joe LaMariana, San Mateo County RecycleWorks
Bruce Mast, Build It Green
Juda Tomasoff, Aide to Supervisor Jerry Hill

Upcoming event:

The 4th Annual Water Conservation Showcase
3/22, 10 am-7:30 pm at PG&E's Pacific Energy Center, 851 Howard St., San Francisco

Actions items

Mario, Jerry, Barbara: continue to urge Larry Buckmaster to include energy and climate change issues in the Progress Seminar.
Richard: contact Ted Droettboom/Bruce Riordan to schedule climate change presentation for C/CAG. Consider when to schedule full USTF presentation to C/CAG.
Staff: Develop and circulate a brief (30 second) soundbyte that C/CAG members can use in their communities. Begin work on a presentation suitable for C/CAG.

Notes

Update on Collaboration/Communication Process

Kathy Lavezzo reported that PG&E remains committed to establishing an effective process for communicating with local governments about upcoming construction maintenance and upgrade projects. The Government Relations office has reorganized, and is in the process of bringing a person on board to handle San Mateo County. Kathy will continue to provide monthly status updates until the process is in place and working well.

CMEQ and C/CAG update

CMEQ was very receptive and engaged at the recent USTF presentation. It accepted all the group's recommendations and passed them on to C/CAG for further approval and action. The presentation sparked a discussion and many questions.

C/CAG also approved the report, adopted the resolution and is in the process of sending the material out to all the cities. The Board is very interested in the topic and anxious to see the goals in the Energy Strategy. Barbara suggested having Ted Droettboom of the Joint Powers Commission (of the 4 regional agencies, ABAG, MTC, BCDC and the Air District) give his climate change presentation to C/CAG.

Deborah requested that staff prepare a brief "commercial" that C/CAG members can use when communicating with others in their community, highlighting the benefits of taking action on energy and climate change. Richard said a full presentation is needed at C/CAG within the next few months.

Kathy suggested inviting other cities to attend the USTF meetings; Dianne Dryer encouraged the task force to invite elected officials to attend or send city staff. The resolution now before the cities asks each to identify a point of contact to work with USTF.

Millbrae Bio-Gas Plant: Kim Springer reported on the new treatment plant in Millbrae, which the countywide Recycling Committee toured recently. The plant processes 3000 gallons a day of waste grease-trap output (80% water, 20% grease), producing microbacteria that increase the plant's capacity to digest wastewater and generate methane. The plant is producing nearly all of its 250 kW capacity and is currently meeting 80% of its own power needs. (Kim's slides are at http://www.ccag.ca.gov/pdf/USTF/reports/Millbrae_Bio-Gas_WWTP_KSpringer_031507.pdf.)

Richard noted that Pacifica has proposed that it collect and process waste oil and sell it as biodiesel. Issues raised by the Air District about the initial proposal are being addressed.

Water Conservation: Nicole explained that most of the Bay Area's water comes from the Hetch Hetchy Power System owned by San Francisco and fed by Sierra snowmelt. Hetch Hetchy provides 96% of San Mateo County's water, leaving the area vulnerable to potential water shortages as the service area grows and to future droughts. The 27 local

water agencies have committed to a 10% reduction in water use by 2030 and face pressure to conserve even more.

Water rates charged by Hetch Hetchy to the water agencies will triple in the next several years, increasing from \$400 an acre-foot today to \$1200 in 2015. (Water agencies commonly charge a higher price to end users to cover local transmission costs, so the cost to the public is even higher.)

Cities can reduce their own water use -- saving money and setting a good example for their citizens -- by installing efficient fixtures and following water-efficient landscape guidelines. Low-flow toilets have a negative reputation to overcome, and displaying different models such as Redwood City is doing can help the public overcome their concerns. Other water-saving fixtures are low-flow urinals and cooling towers, which can save significant amounts of water, energy and money.

There are few funding sources for water conservation programs. BAWSCA is trying to work with the local water agencies to make information available, but at this time, it is mostly in response to inquiries. Information about best conservation practices is available through the statewide water agency, the California Urban Water Council. Locally, Redwood City has taken action to reduce its water usage and bill because it was over its water allotment, and has saved money in the process.

For the Energy Strategy, Nicole recommends tying water conservation to other benefits such as saving money and energy. Examples of this double- or triple impact approach are PG&E's energy rebate for cooling tower retrofits and high-efficiency washers. We can also share information about the return on investment experienced by Redwood City with its water conservation measures.

AB 1881 requires cities to update landscaping ordinances to be at least as efficient as the state model (still in development). The new guidelines will encourage on-site use of stormwater, irrigation monitors and smart irrigation controls. Specific commercial applications (ice machines, food steamers, dishwashers, spray valves) and fixing system leaks are other ways to reduce water use.

Nicole's presentation is at
http://www.ccag.ca.gov/pdf/USTF/reports/Water_Conservation_NSandkulla_031507.pdf.

Policies and Incentives for Promoting Green Building: Bruce Mast of Build It Green highlighted the environmental compliance and economic development benefits of enacting green building policies and incentives.¹ According to a survey conducted by BIG last year², local governments in California are offering four types of incentives to residents to employ green building techniques, mostly for new construction: expedited

¹ Build It Green is a Berkeley-based statewide resource that provides tools and information about green building to cities, suppliers, builders and the public, and fosters its widespread adoption.

² The survey is at http://www.ccag.ca.gov/pdf/USTF/reports/local_green_bldg_programs_0306.pdf

permits, grants or loans, other financial incentives (such as reduced permit fees) and technical assistance.

Ordinances have been most commonly used so far; some local governments have passed resolutions and others use conditions of approval as a means to encourage (or require) green building methods. The number of new single and multi-family homes that meet BIG's Green Point Rated system (a point-based way of assessing a house's environmental impact) has increased markedly in the last few years, with more in the pipeline.

Build It Green recommends that cities work together, partner with local builders to encourage green construction and build consumer demand for green homes. Successful programs require a champion who is willing to work across departments. Where staff is uninterested or unable to support a green building program, cities can institute an ordinance that relies on third party inspectors and outside resources to do the work, such as Santa Rosa has done. In situations where no one in city government promotes green building, builders can still follow green building principles and get their projects certified as green by going through BIG's third-party certified Green Point Rated program.

Research suggests that the energy efficiency measures reach their limit at approximately 50% above Title 24 standards. In other words, there is only so much energy efficiency that can be achieved cost-effectively, but almost all construction falls far short of the limit. Bruce's presentation is at

http://www.ccag.ca.gov/pdf/USTF/reports/BuildItGreen_BMast_031507.pdf.

Jill reminded the Task Force that the county has its own green building checklist and set of programs that should be included in the Energy Strategy.

Next meeting

We will meet at the **Westin SFO at 2:30** for a tour of the newly-operational fuel cell system. The address is **1 Old Bayshore Highway, Millbrae, California 94030**. We'll also see a short video on Adobe's LEED Platinum building in San Jose, and hear from Seth Fearey of Joint Venture Silicon Valley Network about a proposed way to tackle climate protection as a region.